

UNCLASSIFIED

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 HA-02 NSC-05 SP-02 PM-03 L-01
H-01 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01 PA-01
USIA-01 /047 W

-----043731 142134Z /64
P 141930Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3710

[REDACTED] BUENOS AIRES 9523

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS SHUM, AR
SUBJECT DETAINED OR ABDUCTED HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

REF: BUENOS AIRES 9420; STATE 295886

1. AMBASSADOR RAISED MATTER OF RECENTLY
DETAINED OR ABDUCTED HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS
FROM MOTHERS OF PLAZA DE MAYO GROUP DURING
SOCIAL OCCASION WITH ADMIRAL MASSERA EVENING
DECEMBER 12, DURING COURTESY CALL ON MINISTER
OF ECONOMY MARTINEZ DE HOZ EARLIER ON THE SAME
DAY, AND ON DECEMBER 13 WITH CHIEF OF THE ARMY
STAFF GENERAL ROBERTO VIOLA. WE ARE CERTAIN
VIOLA WILL TELL PRESIDENT VIDELA OF US CONCERN
OVER THIS INCIDENT.

2. MASSERA PROFESSED NOT TO HAVE KNOWN OF
EVENT UNTIL TOLD BY AMBASSADOR. HE THEN REFUSED
TO REGISTER SURPRISE SINCE--IN HIS WORDS--THIS
SORT OF MUDDLED, ILL-JUDGED CAPER IS WHAT ONE HAS COME
TO EXPECT OF THE ARMY. VIOLA KNEW OF INCIDENT BUT DIS-
CLAIMED ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THE ABDUCTIONS' ORIGINS AND/OR

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INTENTIONS. HE CONFIDED THAT HE HAS MADE AND WILL
CONTINUE TO MAKE CONSIDERABLE EFFORT TO DISCOVER WHO

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ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS
Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
(X) Release () Excise () Deny
Exemption(s):
Declassify: () In Part (X) In Full
() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to
Date Declassify on Reason

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AUTHORED AND CARRIED OUT THE EVENT BUT SO FAR HAS NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL. VIOLA WENT ON TO SPECULATE THAT SOME "OFFICIAL AUTHORIZATION" OF THE ABDUCTIONS HAD TAKEN PLACE, HINTING THUS HIS BELIEF THAT ANOTHER MILITARY SERVICE (READ NAVY) HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE. MARTINEZ DE HOZ--AND ALSO DEFENSE MINISTER KLIX, TO WHOM THE SUBJECT WAS RAISED AT A SOCIAL OCCASION WITH A LARGER GROUP OF PEOPLE--TOOK THE HARD LINE THAT THIS IS BUT A NEW DIRTY INCIDENT IN AN OLD DIRTY WAR, ESSENTIALLY JUSTIFYING THE ABDUCTION AS HAVING PROPER SECURITY MOTIVATION EVEN WHILE DISCLAIMING KNOWLEDGE OF THE FACTS.

3. PERSONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE MOTHERS' PROTEST MOVEMENT SPECULATE THAT THE ABDUCTION-DETENTION MIGHT HAVE BEEN STAGED TO DETER A LARGE PRE-CHRISTMAS DEMONSTRATION AT THE PLAZA DE MAYO SLATED FOR TOMORROW DECEMBER 15. IF THIS IS THE CASE THEN THEY EXPECT THE DETAINED GROUP TO REAPPEAR OVER THE WEEKEND, MONDAY AT LATEST. IF THIS FAILS TO TAKE PLACE THEN CLEARLY THE INCIDENT WILL TAKE ON EXTRAORDINARY SIGNIFICANCE IN THE HISTORY OF DISAPPEARANCES IN ARGENTINA.

4. BUENOS AIRES HERALD--WHICH IS STILL THE ONLY LOCAL PAPER THAT HAS COVERED THE DISAPPEARANCES--REPORTED TODAY DECEMBER 14 THAT THE EMBASSY OF FRANCE HAS PROTESTED THE DISAPPEARANCE OF TWO NUNS WORKING FOR A FRENCH MISSIONARY ORDER HERE. THE FIRST, SISTER ALICIA (NEE ANA MARIA DOMON), A NATURALIZED ARGENTINE, WAS MENTIONED IN THE BUENOS AIRES REFTEL AMONG THOSE WHO DISAPPEARED FROM THE CHURCH OF SANTA CRUZ. THE SECOND, A SISTER LEONIE (NEE RENEE DUQUET) IS REPORTED TO HAVE

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BEEN TAKEN OVER THE PAST WEEKEND BY FOUR MEN DRIVING AN UNMARKED, US-MADE CAR. SISTER ALICIA IS REPORTED TO HAVE WORKED WITH A MONSIGNOR NOVAK IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT, WHILE SISTER LEONIE WAS ASSOCIATED WITH THE BISHOP OF SAN JUSTO, MONSIGNOR CARRERAS, AT THE CHAPEL OF SAN PABLO IN RAMOS MEJIA. THE HERALD GAVE AGES OF ALICIA AND LEONIE AS 40 AND 61, RESPECTIVELY.

5. WE WILL PURSUE OUR INQUIRIES, OF COURSE, INCLUDING AT FOREIGN MINISTRY.
CASTRO

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